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THE

CHARTER OF INCORPORATION

AND

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B Y - L A W S

OF THE

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

TOGETHER WITH A

LIST OF THE OFFICERS,

AND AN

ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

HARTFORD:

PRINTED BY CASE, TIFFANY & CO., PEARL-STREET.

1839.



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OFFICERS
OF THE
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
1839.

PRESIDENT,
THOMAS DAY.

VICE-PRESIDENTS,
Prof. JAMES L. KINGSLEY, *New-Haven.*
Rev. DAVID D. FIELD, *Haddam.*

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY,
HENRY BARNARD, 2D.

RECORDING SECRETARY,
CHARLES HOSMER.

TREASURER,
JAMES B. HOSMER.

STANDING COMMITTEE,
CHARLES DAVIES, ERASTUS SMITH,
NATHAN JOHNSON, Rev. GEORGE BURGESS,
SAMUEL H. HUNTINGTON, JOHN P. BRACE,
E. CHAMPION BACON.
THOMAS DAY, *Chairman.*
CHARLES HOSMER, *Clerk.*

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A D D R E S S .

THE Connecticut Historical Society was incorporated at the session of the General Assembly in 1825, for the purpose of discovering, procuring and preserving matter relative to the civil, ecclesiastical and natural history of this State and of the United States. The society was organized under the charter, soon after it was granted, with the venerable author of *McFingal* at its head; that indefatigable antiquarian, the Rev. Mr. (since Dr.) *Thomas Robbins*, being Corresponding Secretary, and the accomplished Professor *Doane*, now Bishop of New-Jersey, Secretary of the Standing Committee. Several meetings were held of the society and of the committee; by-laws were passed; new members were propounded and elected; an address to the public was published; and contributions of considerable value were received. Within a year from the first meeting, however, Judge *Trumbull* and Prof. *Doane* removed from the State; and the operations of the society were suspended. In 1839, the charter was revived; and the society was reorganized under it.

The general and ultimate object of this society is the *history* of our state and country. Its functions are three-fold; the *discovery*, the *collection* and the *preservation* of the materials of such history. To do these things most effectively, associated action is necessary. Association awakens attention and keeps it awake; stimulates effort; encourages perseverance. An isolated individual may discover a document or become acquainted with a fact, which, by itself, would be regarded as unworthy of serious attention, and would consequently be neglected; and yet, in connexion with other documents and other facts, it would supply a chasm in a course of events, and render certain and consistent what before appeared doubtful and discordant—at once shedding light upon its concomitants, and being itself illustrated by light reflected from them.

There is not a nation on earth that has existed two hundred years, the sources of whose history are more abundant and authentic than those of our own. Its origin was not in a barbarous age; its first settlers were not savage and ignorant men; the monuments of their liberties were not merely traditions and customs. The very foundations of our civil polity and the framework of the superstructure rest on enduring records. These are expressed with great precision; are written in legible characters; and come to us in a good state of preservation. The proceedings of all our corporations, from the sovereign power to a school district, are matters of record; and all our tribunals of justice are courts of record. Something more, however, is desirable, if not necessary, to develop the internal structure and gradual advance of society; and the means of supplying this *desideratum* are found, to some extent, in almost every family. They exist in letters and journals; in entries in the blank leaves of bibles, almanacs and other books; in wills, deeds, covenants and other contracts; in indentures of apprenticeship; in the proceedings of public bodies, whether civil or ecclesiastical, whether corporations or voluntary associations; in maps, charts and surveys; in the inscriptions on monuments and grave-stones; in articles of dress, furniture and equipage; in portraits and other pictures; in the implements of the husbandman, the tools of the mechanic and the machinery of the manufacturer; in coins and paper used as a currency; in weapons of war and military standards; in Indian relics; in minutes of meteorological observations; in newspapers and hand-bills; and in printed books of every description, from the ponderous folio to the ephemeral pamphlet.

But numerous and multifarious as these materials are, they are scattered over every part of the country; each is known only to a few; and, under ordinary circumstances, they will be disregarded by all. The attention of observers needs to be excited and directed to them. They must also have a tangible object in collecting and preserving them; for efforts apparently fruitless, or not seen to be otherwise, will seldom be made. A general and permanent *repository* affords the only effectual means of preservation—of guarding against “the corrosions of time and the power of accident.” This security may, and as opportunity is afforded, will be perfected, by publication.

The appropriate objects of the society embrace not only the annals of the past, but the *statistics* of our own times. The value

of such enquiries as tend to develope the present condition and the resources of the country, is now better understood and more highly appreciated than formerly; but to prosecute them successfully and profitably, associated action and a safe and permanent repository, are peculiarly desirable.

For the accomplishment of its views the society relies not only upon the exertions of its own members, but confidently appeals to our citizens generally for their encouragement and assistance. Let it be borne in mind, that the members are to derive no private advantage from the operations of the society, but that the benefits resulting therefrom are exclusively of a public nature.

In the following list, the principal sources of the information sought by the society, are enumerated. Any of the articles therein specified will be gratefully received and carefully preserved, subject to be withdrawn, if required, at any time, from the library or cabinet, by the person depositing them.

Manuscripts, Records, Pamphlets, and Books, relative to the History of this State, and of the United States:

Orations, Sermons, Essays, Discourses, Poems and Tracts, written, or delivered, on any public occasion, or in reference to any remarkable character or event; especially, biographical memoirs and anecdotes of distinguished persons in this state, or who have been connected with its settlement or history:

Laws, Journals, Copies of Records, and Proceedings of Congresses, Legislatures, General Assemblies, Conventions, Committees of Safety, Secret Committees, Treaties and Negotiations with Indian Tribes, or with any State or Nation:

Proceedings of Ecclesiastical Conventions or Councils, of all denominations of Christians:

Narratives of Missionaries, Proceedings of Missionary or other Religious Societies:

Accounts of Universities, Colleges, Academies, or Public Schools, their origin, progress and present state:

Catalogues of Libraries; Transactions of Societies for Literary, Scientific, or Political purposes:

Topographical descriptions of Cities, Towns, Counties, &c. with Maps:

Tables of Diseases, Births, Deaths, and Population:

Accounts of Exports and Imports at various periods, and of the progress of Commerce, Manufactures, and Agriculture:

Meteorological observations of every kind:

Memoirs, Anecdotes and Epistolary Correspondence of eminent Americans, or of others connected with the settlement and history of America :

Magazines, Reviews, Pamphlets, Newspapers, &c., especially those of an early date :

All Books, Pamphlets, &c. published within the State :

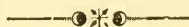
Original Essays on the Civil, Ecclesiastical and Natural History of any State, City, Town, &c. :

Genealogies of Families, especially of the first settlers of the Colony, brought down to the present time :

Specimens in every department of Natural Science.

All communications for the Society, or Donations to its Library or Cabinet, are to be transmitted to Hartford, addressed to *Charles Hosmer*, Esq. Recording Secretary, and Clerk of the Standing Committee.

A convenient room in the City of Hartford, central and of easy access, with suitable cases, shelves and other accommodations, has been provided; and the society has recommenced its operations, under favorable auspices, and with a spirit, which, if cherished, can hardly fail of success.



ACTS OF INCORPORATION.

1ST ACT.

At a General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, holden at Hartford, in said State, on the first Wednesday of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five :

UPON the petition of John Trumbull, and others, shewing that in other States societies have been formed for the purpose of collecting records and other documents connected with the early settlement of our country, and praying for an act of incorporation, for the purpose of discovering, procuring and preserving whatever may relate to the civil, ecclesiastical and natural history of the United States, and especially of the State of Connecticut :

Resolved by this Assembly, That John Trumbull, Thomas C.

Brownell, Timothy Pitkin, John S. Peters, William W. Ellsworth, Thomas Day, Thomas Robbins, Daniel Burhans, Thomas Hubbard, Isaac Toucey, Nathaniel S. Wheaton, George Sumner, Roger M. Sherman, William T. Williams, Martin Welles, Joseph Battell, William Cooley, Thomas H. Gallaudet, Thomas S. Williams, Eli Todd, Walter Mitchell, George W. Doane, Samuel B. Woodward, Samuel H. Huntington, Samuel W. Dana, James Gould, Samuel A. Foot, Nathan Johnson, Hawley Olmsted, Benjamin Trumbull, and John Hall, and their associates and successors, be, and hereby are, ordained, constituted and declared to be forever hereafter a body corporate, by the name of the CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, and by that name they, and their associates and successors, shall and may have perpetual succession, shall be capable of suing and being sued, pleading and being impleaded, and also to purchase, receive, hold, and convey any estate, real or personal, to an amount not exceeding thirty thousand dollars; and may have a common seal, and the same may alter at pleasure; may establish rules relative to the admission of future members; may ordain, establish, and put in execution such by-laws and regulations, not contrary to the provisions of this Charter, or the laws of this State, as shall be deemed necessary for the government of said corporation.

And be it further Resolved, That the Governor of this State, the Lieutenant-Governor, and the Judges of the Superior Court, shall be *ex officio* members of the Society.

And be it further Resolved, That said corporation shall meet once a year for the choice of a President, Vice-President, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officers as may be designated from time to time by the by-laws of the Society.

And be it further Resolved, That the first meeting of the society shall be holden at the State-House in Hartford, at such time as shall be designated by the Honorable John Trumbull, notice thereof being previously given in one or more newspapers printed in Hartford.

Provided nevertheless, That this act of incorporation shall be subject to be revoked or altered at the pleasure of the General Assembly.

2D ACT.

At a General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, holden at Hartford, in said State, on the first Wednesday of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine :

Whereas John Trumbull and others, at the session of this Assembly, held at Hartford, on the first Wednesday of May, 1825, were incorporated, by the name of the Connecticut Historical Society, for the purpose of discovering, procuring and preserving materials for the civil, ecclesiastical and natural history of the United States, and especially of the State of Connecticut : And whereas, it was provided by the act of incorporation, that said corporation should meet once a year for the choice of a president, vice-president, corresponding secretary, recording secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as might be designated from time to time, by the by-laws of the society : And whereas, the persons so incorporated, met in the month of May, 1825, and accepted said act of incorporation, and elected the officers mentioned therein, who entered upon the duties assigned them respectively ; but since the year 1825, there has been no election of officers in said society, and it is now a matter of doubt whether the charter of said society is not forfeited by non-user ; and if otherwise, it is difficult to ascertain who are now members : And whereas, some valuable historical materials were collected by said society, while it was in operation, which have been thus far preserved, but which are in danger of being scattered and lost, without the care of this, or some similar institution : And whereas, the objects of said society are important and worthy of legislative protection and encouragement : it is, therefore,

Resolved and declared by this Assembly, That the existence of said society as a body corporate, with the powers and privileges originally granted thereto, be continued and perpetuated, as though its officers had been chosen annually since 1825.

Resolved further, That Thomas C. Brownell, John S. Peters, Wm. W. Ellsworth, Thomas Day, Thomas Robbins, Isaac Toncey, George Sumner, Roger M. Sherman, William T. Williams, Martin Welles, Thomas H. Gallaudet, Walter Mitchell, Samuel H. Huntington, Nathan Johnson, Hawley Olmsted, David S. Boardman, Charles Hosmer, Epaphroditus C. Bacon, Erastus Smith, George R. Bulkley, Edward C. Herrick, Noah Porter, jr.,

James L. Kingsley, Leonard Bacon, Nathaniel Goodwin, Charles Davies, Royal R. Hinman, John A. Rockwell, Thomas B. Butler, L. P. Waldo, Andrew T. Judson, Henry Barnard, 2d., Elkanah H. Hodges, shall be deemed the present members of said society, and shall continue such, subject to the regulations and by-laws of said society : Provided, that the payment of three dollars as an admission fee, for the benefit of the society, shall be an essential qualification of membership ; and no person who has not already paid such fee, shall hereafter be deemed a member, until such payment be made.

Resolved further, That Thomas Day be empowered to call the next meeting of said society, for the choice of officers, and the transaction of other business, at such place in the city of Hartford, and at such time as he may designate for that purpose, giving previous notice thereof, in one or more newspapers printed in said city.

Provided, nevertheless, that these Resolves, as well as the original act of incorporation, shall be subject to be revoked or altered, at the pleasure of the General Assembly.



B Y - L A W S

OF THE

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

1. In addition to the officers mentioned in the original charter, there shall be appointed, annually, seven Vice-Presidents, and a Standing Committee, consisting of said officers and seven other members ; all which officers shall hold their offices for one year and until others shall be elected in their stead. When a vacancy in any office, by resignation, death, or removal from the state, shall happen during the year, the Standing Committee may fill the same for the remainder of the term.

2. The annual meeting of the society shall be held in the month of May, at such time and place as the Standing Committee shall appoint for that purpose ; they giving previous notice thereof,

in such manner as they may deem proper. Special meetings may be called by the President, or other senior officer in the society, on the application or with the consent of three members; public notice thereof being previously given.

3. The Standing Committee shall have power to manage the business and concerns of the society, in all cases, except the appointment of the annual officers and the election of new members; and it shall be their duty to promote the objects of the society, by such means and in such ways as they may deem proper. Any three members of such committee may constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

4. The Corresponding Secretary shall receive and keep all communications addressed to or intended for the society; and shall conduct the correspondence in behalf of the society.

5. The Recording Secretary shall have the custody of the files, records and seal of the society; shall give notice to new members of their election, and shall furnish them with certificates of membership; shall, when directed by the proper officer of the society, call meetings of the same; and shall keep an accurate journal of the transactions of the society.

6. The Treasurer shall receive the admission fees, and report the names of the persons paying the same to the recording secretary; he shall also receive all other monies due, and all donations or bequests of money made to the society. He shall pay to the order of the chairman of the Standing Committee, such sums as may be required for the ordinary expenses of the society, and such as the society may otherwise direct to be paid. He shall keep a true and faithful account of all moneys received and paid by him, and of the property and debts of the society; and shall, at the annual meeting in May, render a particular statement, to be examined and audited by a committee appointed for that purpose.

7. Additional members may be chosen by ballot, and by a major vote, on the nomination of the Standing Committee, at any legal meeting of the society, at which not less than seven members are present. Honorary members residing out of this state, not at any time to exceed half the number of other members, may be chosen, in the same manner, at any legal meeting of the society; which last-mentioned members shall not be subject to any admission fee or tax.

8. All donations to, and deposits with, the society, shall be entered in a book kept for the purpose.

9. No donation shall be exchanged or disposed of, unless the society have a duplicate of the same.

10. All deposits left with the society shall be carefully preserved, and may at any time be taken by the depositor personally, or delivered on his written order. But if the depositor shall fail to take back the same, or give his order therefor, then the same shall be entered among the donations of the society, and kept as their other property; unless, at the time of making the deposit, other conditions shall be prescribed by the depositor.

11. If any person elected as a resident member, shall neglect to pay the admission fee for the period of three months after he shall have been notified by the Recording Secretary of his election, he shall be considered as declining the election.



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